

hearts, for had not the Brethren remembered them? New hope was born, weariness fled, fresh will to do was enkindled; gratitude to God was poured out for their knowledge of the truth, for their testimony that God lived, that Jesus was the Christ, that Joseph was a prophet, . . . and that for the righteous a crown of glory awaited that should be theirs during the eternities of the life to come."

He states that at the conclusion of their journey, "[they] all sank to their knees in the joy of their souls, thanking God that at last they were in Zion. 'Zion, Zion, lovely Zion, beautiful Zion, Zion, City of our God' " (in Conference Report, Oct. 1947, pp. 157-58).

What a thrill of joy must have moved Andrew as he said to Peter, "We have found the Messiah" (John 1:41). Along with countless thousands, it has "come to pass that the righteous

shall be gathered out from among all nations, and shall come to Zion, singing with songs of everlasting joy" (D&C 45:71).

May we lift our souls this beautiful Easter morning with the assurance that through the mystic call of the restored gospel we have come to the threshold of Zion and the gateway to eternal life. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

### President Hinckley

Elder Wm. Grant Bangerter, recently sustained as a member of the Presidency of the First Quorum of the Seventy, has just spoken to us.

We shall now be pleased to hear from Elder H. Burke Peterson, who was yesterday sustained a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy, having previously served as First Counselor in the Presiding Bishopric.

## Elder H. Burke Peterson

### Gratitude

This morning my spirit is subdued as I express my thanks to the Lord for the opportunity to serve and to learn. I am grateful for his trust and confidence. I would also like you to know that I have treasured choice memories involving many faithful employees of the Church, both here and in the far-off reaches of the world. They are Saints of the first order. My feelings are tender as I express my love to Bishop Brown, Bishop Clarke, and Bishop Featherstone, with whom I've served these past years. I will miss the brotherhood of the Presiding Bishopric.

My wife and I are thrilled and honored with the call to devote our efforts and energies in the holy temple. We know somewhat of the magnificent experience this will be. I express my deep appreciation to the Brethren for extend-

ing to us this unusual opportunity for service.

A few years ago I had been assigned with other General Authorities to attend a series of area conferences in New Zealand and Australia. Initially, the leader of our group was to have been President Spencer W. Kimball. However, because of the need for some emergency surgery, he could not travel with us, so President N. Eldon Tanner led the group in his place.

Each day during the trip President Tanner telephoned President Kimball in his hospital room to get a report on his condition and to give a brief report of the conferences in which we were participating. After the daily call to Salt Lake City, President Tanner would always give us a report on the President's condition. We were anxious and appreciated these brief messages.

Once, after we had been out for five or six days, President Tanner made

his usual call to the hospital in Salt Lake City. However, this day he had no report for us. When we asked if he had talked to the President, he told us he had tried, but President Kimball wasn't in his room. "Where was he?" we asked. "They weren't sure; they couldn't find him," President Tanner said. "They thought he might have gone down to the next floor of the hospital to visit the sick."

To paraphrase a statement made by Wendell Phillips, it may be accurately said, "How prudently most men sink into nameless graves, while now and then a few *forget themselves into immortality*" (as quoted by William Jennings Bryan, *The Prince of Peace* [Independence: Zion's Printing and Publishing Co., 1925]).

### Christlike patterns for living

In the day-to-day process of living, with all of its trials, challenges, and discouragements, we often underestimate our own God-given attributes and abilities which make it possible for each of us to pattern his or her life after that of the Savior and, in fact, do some of the things he did as he lived here among men. We may never personally experience the miracle of raising the dead, or be one to turn water into wine. We may not be one of thousands who may be fed from a few aves and fishes, or be a part of the miraculous experience of walking on a stormy sea. But for each one of us, there are a number of Christlike patterns of living we can be a part of in our mortal sojourn.

For instance, with us here today there are more than a few who display unquestioning obedience to whatever is asked of them—as did he. There are those who are complete in their forgiveness of the offenses of others—as was he. Some among us are scrupulously honest, even when it isn't convenient—as was he. The list of Christlike attributes and patterns of living goes on and on, as does the list of those who will continue to strive to be obedient,

however difficult it may be. Thank heaven for those who keep trying! They cannot fail.

### The selfless person

This morning I would like to teach of another divine attribute—a quality which, when it becomes part of our lives, produces as an outgrowth individuals who are happy in their relationships with others and at peace with themselves and those around them: siblings who enjoy each other more; married couples who cherish their relationships; those who are alone, for whatever reason, who find a fuller and more abundant life. You see, there are those among us today who are completely *selfless*—as was he.

A selfless person is one who is more concerned about the happiness and well-being of another than about his or her own convenience or comfort, one who is willing to serve another when it is neither sought for nor appreciated, or one who is willing to serve even those whom he or she dislikes. A selfless person displays a willingness to sacrifice, a willingness to purge from his or her mind and heart personal wants, and needs, and feelings. Instead of reaching for and requiring praise and recognition for himself, or gratification of his or her own wants, the selfless person will meet these very human needs for others. Remember the words of the Savior as he taught his disciples on an occasion when personal recognition was being sought: "But Jesus called them to him, and saith unto them, . . . whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister: And whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all. For even the son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Mark 10:42-45).

### The selfish person

There is another word that sounds almost like the one we have been using. However, it is an ugly word. It de-

scribes a characteristic of satanic proportions. We will not say much of this word, for it is not pleasant to think about, and we don't like to use it. The word is *selfish*. The dictionary describes a selfish person as one who is "concerned excessively or exclusively with oneself: seeking pleasure or well-being without regard for others" (*Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary*). May we add, a selfish person is often one who refers to "I," "me," and "mine" rather than to "we," "ours," "yours," or "theirs." This person is anxious to be in the limelight, to be on center stage in life's little dramas. He or she may be a poor listener, or a conversation monopolizer. Selfishness is the great unknown sin. No selfish person ever thought himself to be selfish.

### Self-evaluation

Now let's be positive again. What can we do to cultivate and nurture this divine quality of selflessness? May I suggest, as a first step, that there be a very careful, introspective evaluation. Consider the behavioral patterns we have just referred to. Do any of them fit your style or conduct? For instance:

—Could you be obedient if you were asked to give up your home for two or three years, leave your children and grandchildren, and go across the world to live in a place much less comfortable than your own home, in a culture strange to you? Many here today have done it without a backward glance.

—To those who live alone: will you feel as lonely if you make a nursing home visit after work before you go home for dinner?

—As a parent, can you take precious time to listen to a son or daughter tell you about what the young people are wearing, or what the teacher said? If you do, *without interrupting*, you may find they'll talk to you when they are *really* troubled because they've learned you listen.

—At a dinner or in a group, notice yourself. Do you take up a large share of the conversation time?

### Attitude of service

As part of this self-evaluation process, it is important to remember there can be no successful change in any of us unless we recognize a need to change. That must come first.

With the recognition of the need to improve, may we now suggest that as a part of the process of cultivating and nurturing the attribute of selflessness we begin to develop an attitude of service—the ongoing desire for the well-being of others. A beginning would be feeling empathy for those who need uplifting, then acting with caring thoughtfulness. It could be:

—A telephone visit with someone who lives alone—just to chat about the day's experiences.

—Or perhaps a note to a youth speaker who did his best last Sunday.

—Even a thank-you to an unruly neighbor boy when he *doesn't* jump your fence or smash your flower garden. Remember, those who are not the most attractive in their behavior or looks are the ones who need our caring concern the most.

—Or could it be stopping to talk to someone who is handicapped with whom you've never before taken the time to get acquainted? Are we cultivating an awareness that they have the same longings for love and friendship all of us have and yet usually get so much less?

It is important to break the chains of "self" that bind us. Sincere and sensitive acts in behalf of *others* are the mark of the selfless.

### A family experience

Now to those who may be incapacitated in any one of a variety of ways, be it physical, mental, or financial—to those who *cannot* do what you would sincerely *like* to do for

another—let me tell of a personal family experience.

Some months ago my wife drove down to Provo for her customary weekly visit with her mother, who had been ill for some time. On this particular day her mother had been having an unusually difficult time, and didn't have the strength to hold up her head, or even open her eyes. Though she was physically restricted, she was very alert mentally, and as my wife was caring for her many needs of the day she visited with her about family and friends. My wife held her mother's head up with one hand while she fed her with the other, and during the meal their conversation turned to one of our daughters and her husband who have five children under the age of seven. My wife commented to her mother that three of our daughter's children had chicken pox at the same time. The fact that this little mother was unusually busy was obvious. My mother-in-law stopped eating, thought for a moment, and then in a weak, almost inaudible voice said, "I feel so sorry for Robin. I wish I could go to her home and help her." A few moments later, as my wife pondered this wish, she observed, "You know, Mother, I think in your case wanting to is enough. Surely you will receive a blessing for service and selflessness as though you went to her home and helped."

When I was told of the experience, I recalled the words of King Benjamin when, in his final address to his people, he said, "And again, I say unto the poor, ye who have not and yet have sufficient, that ye remain from day to day; I mean all you who deny the beggar, because ye have not; I would that ye say in your hearts that: I give not because I have not, but if I had I would give" (Mosiah 4:24).

It is my feeling that, after all is said and done, it will be the intent of the heart by which we shall be judged. However, let us be careful that we do not fill our hearts with *unjustified* ex-

cuses. Being selfless does not come naturally to most of us. Often it is easier to say, "I can't," or "I'm made differently," or "I don't have time," than it is to become involved in making life happier and more pleasant for others. Let us remember the words from the scriptures:

"Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. . . .

"Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink?

"When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee?

"Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee?

"And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me" (Matthew 25:34, 37-40).

*Selflessness* is a beautifully expressive word. It is a divine word expressing a divine pattern of living.

I testify of the selflessness of the Savior. I testify that through his life, his atoning sacrifice, and his resurrection, he has made possible resurrection for all mankind, and eternal life for the obedient. I know that he lives!

In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

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The Choir sang "Love Divine" without announcement.

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### President Hinckley

Elder H. Burke Peterson spoke to us, followed by the choir singing "Love Divine."

Elder Thomas S. Monson of the Council of the Twelve will be our concluding speaker.